

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original) Microcapsules having a core material encapsulated within a microcapsular shell, said core material comprises at least one active ingredient, wherein the microcapsular shell comprises at least one inorganic polymer comprising polymerized precursors obtained by in-situ polymerization of said precursors; wherein the concentration of the core material based total weight of the microcapsules is above 95% w/w.
2. (cancel)
3. (cancel)
4. (cancel)
5. (cancel)
6. (cancel)
7. (cancel)
8. (cancel)
9. (Original) The microcapsules of claim 1 wherein the active ingredient is selected from sunscreen agents, dental agents, fragrances, perfume, colors and dyes, food colors,

food additives, waxes, antioxidants, humidifiers, vitamins, explosives, pesticides, biological molecules, drugs, catalysts, reagents, and mixtures thereof.

10. (Original) The microcapsules of claim 9 wherein said drug is selected from dermatological agents, anti-inflammatory agents, analgesics, anti-fungal agents, anti-biotics, anti-viral agents, anti-acne agents, anti histamines, skin whitening agents, anti-parasitic agents, muscle relaxants, steroids, hormones, astringents and mixtures thereof.

11. (cancel)

12. (cancel)

13. (Currently Amended) The microcapsules of claim ~~41~~9 wherein said sunscreen agent is selected from octylmethoxy cinnamate, 3-butylmethoxydibenzoyl methane, benzophenone-3, benzophenone-1, benzophenone-2, benzophenone-4, benzophenone-6, benzophenone-8, 2-ethylhexyl p-methoxycinnamate, p-aminobenzoic acid, 2-ethylhexyl N, N-dimethyl-p-aminobenzoate, 2-cyano-3, 3-diphenylacrylic acid 2-ethylhexyl ester, 2-ethylhexyl-2-cyano-3,3-diphenylacrylate, oxybenzone, 2-phenylbenzimidazole-5-sulfonic acid, homomenthyl salicylate, octyl salicylate, 4,4'-methoxy-t-butylidibenzoylmethane, 4-isopropyl dibenzoylmethane, 3-(4-methylbenzylidene) camphor, 3-benzylidene camphor, triethanolamine salicylate, 4-N,N-(2-ethylhexyl)methyl aminobenzoic acid ester of 2,4-dihydroxybenzophenone, 4-N,N-(2-ethylhexyl)methyl aminobenzoic acid ester of 4-hydroxydibenzoylmethane, 4-N,N-(2-ethylhexyl)methyl- aminobenzoic acid ester of 2-hydroxy-4-(2-hydroxyethoxy)- benzophenone, 4-N,N-(2-ethylhexyl)methyl aminobenzoic acid ester of 4-(2-hydroxyethoxy)dibenzoylmethane, and mixtures thereof.

14. (cancel)

15. (Original) The microcapsules of claim 9 wherein said dye is a fluorescent dye.

16. (cancel)

17. (Original) The microcapsules of claim 1 wherein said precursors are selected from metal alkoxide monomers, semi-metal alkoxide monomers, metal ester monomers, semi-metal ester monomers and from monomers of the formula $M(R)_n(P)_m$, wherein M is a metallic or semi metallic element, R is a hydrolysable substituent, n is an integer from 2 to 6, P is a non polymerizable substituent and m is an integer from 0 to 6, a partially hydrolyzed and partially condensed polymer thereof, and any mixture thereof.

18. (cancel)

19. (Original) The microcapsules of claim 17 wherein said precursors are selected from silicon alkoxide monomers, silicon ester monomers, monomers of the formula $Si(R)_n(P)_m$, where R is a hydrolysable substituent, n is an integer from 2 to 4, P is a non polymerizable substituent and m is an integer from 0 to 4, a partially hydrolyzed and partially condensed polymer thereof, and any mixture thereof.

20. (cancel)

21. (cancel)

22. (Currently Amended) The microcapsules of claim 19 ~~or 21~~ wherein said silicon alkoxide monomer is selected from tetramethoxy silane, tetraethoxy silane, and mixtures thereof.

23. (Currently Amended) The microcapsules of claim 19 ~~or 21~~ wherein said silicon alkoxide monomer is tetraethoxy silane.

24. (Original) The microcapsules of claim 1 wherein said active ingredient is a sunscreen agent and said precursor is tetraethoxy silane.

25. (cancel)

26. (cancel)

27. (cancel)

28. (cancel)

29. (Currently Amended) A composition comprising microcapsules ~~as defined in any one of the preceding claims~~ having a core material encapsulated within a microcapsular shell, said core material comprises at least one active ingredient, wherein the microcapsular shell comprises at least one inorganic polymer comprising polymerized precursors obtained by in-situ polymerization of said precursors; wherein the concentration of the core material based total weight of the microcapsules is above 95% w/w; and a carrier.

30. (cancel)

31. (cancel)

32. (cancel)

33. (Currently Amended) A suspension, substantially free of colloidal silica, comprising microcapsules ~~as defined in any one of claims 1-28~~ having a core material

encapsulated within a microcapsular shell, said core material comprises at least one active ingredient, wherein the microcapsular shell comprises at least one inorganic polymer comprising polymerized precursors obtained by in-situ polymerization of said precursors; wherein the concentration of the core material based total weight of the microcapsules is above 95% w/w.

34. (cancel)

35.. (cancel)

36. (cancel)

37. (cancel)

38. (cancel)

39. (cancel)

40. (Original) A process for preparing microcapsules having a core material encapsulated within a microcapsular shell, said core material comprises at least one active ingredient,

said process comprising the step of;

preparing an oil-in-water emulsion by emulsification of an oily phase, comprising a water insoluble precursor and the core material, in an aqueous phase, comprising an aqueous solution having a pH in the range 2-7, under appropriate shear forces and temperature conditions;

the process comprising at least one of the following conditions:

- (i) the concentration of the oily phase based on the total weight of the emulsion is from 50% to 90% w/w;
 - (ii) the weight ratio of the precursors to the core material is from 5/95 to 25/75;
- thereby obtaining microcapsules having above 95% w/w of said core material.

41. (Original) The process of claim 40 comprising a combination of the two conditions (i) and (ii).

42. (Original) The process of claim 40 comprising condition (ii).

43. (Original) The process of claim 40 further comprising the step of mixing and stirring said emulsion with another aqueous solution at a suitably selected pH in the range 2-7, to obtain loaded microcapsules in a suspension.

44. (cancel)

45. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 40 ~~or 43~~ wherein the pH of the aqueous solution is in the range 3-4.

46. (cancel)

47. (Original) The process of claim 40 comprising:

- (a) mixing a core material and a precursor in a production reactor forming an oily phase;
- (b) adding an aqueous phase having a pH in the range 2-7 to the production reactor in step (a) to form an oil-in water emulsion; and
- (c) stirring the product obtained in step (b) until microcapsules are formed.

48. (Currently Amended) The process according to ~~any one of claims 40-47~~ to claim 40 wherein the process is conducted in one production reactor.

49. (cancel)

50. (cancel)

51. (Currently Amended) The process of claim ~~46 or~~ 47 further comprising the step of adding an ingredient selected from a surfactant, a catalyst and a mixture thereof after step (b).

52. (Original) The process of claim 51 further comprising the step of diluting with an aqueous diluent after adding said ingredient.

53. (cancel)

54. (cancel)

55. (cancel)

56. (Currently Amended) The process of claim ~~50 or~~ 51 wherein said catalyst is an acidic solution.

57. (cancel)

58. (cancel)

59. (cancel)

60. (Currently Amended) The process of ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 40 further comprising the step of isolating and rinsing the microcapsules through procedures selected from at least one of: separation by centrifuge; filtration; evaporation; re-suspension in aqueous medium; and dialysis.

61. (cancel)

62. (Currently Amended) The process of ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 40 further comprising the step of removing the water to obtain the final product in a powder form.

63. (cancel)

64. (cancel)

65. (cancel)

66. (cancel)

67. (cancel)

68. (cancel)

69. (cancel)

70. (cancel)

71. (cancel)

72. (cancel)

73. (Original) The process of claim 40 wherein the weigh ratio of the precursors to the core material is from 10/90 to 15/85.

74. (Original) The process of claim 40 wherein the weigh ratio of the precursors to the core material is from 10/90 to 15/85 and the pH of said aqueous solution is 3-4.

75. (cancel)

76. (cancel)

77. (cancel)

78. (cancel)

79. (cancel)

80. (cancel)

81. (cancel)

82. (Original) The process of claim 40 wherein the active ingredient is selected from sunscreen agents, dental agents, fragrances, perfume, colors and dyes, food colors, food additives, waxes, antioxidants, humidifiers, vitamins, explosives, pesticides, biological molecules, drugs, catalysts, reagents, and mixtures thereof.

83. (Original) The process of claim 82 wherein said drug is selected from dermatological agents, anti-inflammatory agents, analgesics, anti-fungal agents, anti-biotics, anti-viral agents, anti-acne agents, anti histamines, skin whitening agents, anti-parasitic agents, muscle relaxants, steroids, hormones, astringents, and mixtures thereof.

84. (cancel)

85. (cancel)

86. (Currently Amended) The process of claim ~~84~~-82 wherein said sunscreen agent is selected from octylmethoxy cinnamate, 3-butylmethoxydibenzoyl methane, benzophenone-3, benzophenone-1, benzophenone-2, benzophenone-4, benzophenone-6, benzophenone-8, 2-ethylhexyl p-methoxycinnamate, p-aminobenzoic acid, 2-ethylhexyl N, N-dimethyl-p-aminobenzoate, 2-cyano-3, 3-diphenylacrylic acid 2-ethylhexyl ester, 2-ethylhexyl-2-cyano-3,3-diphenylacrylate, oxybenzone, 2-phenylbenzimidazole-5-sulfonic acid, homomenthyl salicylate, octyl salicylate, 4,4'-methoxy-t-butylidibenzoylmethane, 4-isopropyl dibenzoylmethane, 3-(4-methylbenzylidene) camphor, 3-benzylidene camphor, triethanolamine salicylate, 4-N,N-(2-ethylhexyl)methyl aminobenzoic acid ester of 2,4-dihydroxybenzophenone, 4-N,N-(2-ethylhexyl)methyl aminobenzoic acid ester of 4-hydroxydibenzoylmethane, 4-N,N-(2-ethylhexyl)methyl- aminobenzoic acid ester of 2-

hydroxy-4-(2-hydroxyethoxy)- benzophenone, 4-N,N-(2-ethylhexyl)methyl aminobenzoic acid ester of 4-(2-hydroxyethoxy)dibenzoylmethane, and mixtures thereof.

87. (cancel)

88. (Original) The process of claim 82 wherein said dye is a fluorescent dye.

89. (cancel)

90. (Original) The process of claim 40 wherein said precursors are selected from metal alkoxide monomers, semi-metal alkoxide monomers, metal ester monomers, semi-metal ester monomers and from monomers of the formula $M(R)_n(P)_m$, wherein M is a metallic or semi metallic element, R is a hydrolysable substituent, n is an integer from 2 to 6, P is a non polymerizable substituent and m is an integer from 0 to 6, a partially hydrolyzed and partially condensed polymer thereof, and any mixture thereof.

91. (cancel)

92. (Original) The process of claim 90 wherein said precursors are selected from silicon alkoxide monomers, silicon ester monomers, monomers of the formula $Si(R)_n(P)_m$, where R is a hydrolysable substituent, n is an integer from 2 to 4, P is a non polymerizable substituent and m is an integer from 0 to 4, a partially hydrolyzed and partially condensed polymer thereof, and any mixture thereof.

93. (cancel)

94. (Currently Amended) The process of ~~any one of claims 90-93~~ claim 90 wherein said semi metal alkoxide monomer is silicon alkoxide monomer.

95. (Currently Amended) The process of claim ~~92-or~~94 wherein said silicon alkoxide monomer is selected from tetramethoxy silane, tetraethoxy silane, and mixtures thereof.

96. (Currently Amended) The process of claim ~~92-or~~94 wherein said silicon alkoxide monomer is tetraethoxy silane.

97. (Original) The process of claim 40 wherein said active ingreideint is a sunscreen agent and said precursor is tetraethoxy silane.

98. (cancel)

99. (cancel)

100. (cancel)

101. (cancel)

102. (cancel)

103. (cancel)

104. (cancel)

105. (cancel)

106. (cancel)

107. (cancel)

108. (cancel)

109. (cancel)